

Mr. Bishop (GA) – Madame Speaker, I rise today to honor the Centennial Anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America. For the past one hundred years, the Boy Scouts of America have worked tirelessly to provide an educational program for boys and young adults to build character, to train in the responsibilities of participating citizenship, and to develop personal fitness.

William Boyce founded the Boy Scouts of America on February 8, 1910 using, as a model, the British system of Scouting created by General Robert Baden-Powell in 1907. In 1916, the organization was granted a Congressional Charter, and as the organization grew, it served more and more young men, teaching them to live by the Scout Law. Since its inception, over 110 million Americans have been members of the Boy Scouts of America.

I am proud to say that my life has been strengthened through scouting. As a young man, I was a member of Troop 201 in Mobile, Alabama. It was while earning my merit badges in Citizenship in the Home, Community, and the Nation that my interest in our great political process was ignited. From my experience as an Eagle Scout, I know the time, effort, and thorough dedication the Boy Scouts instilled in me, to be a better person, and to serve God and the greater good of our country.

For a full century, boys and men have gathered and declared: "On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; to help other people at all times; to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight." And for a full century, we have constantly remained Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful, Friendly, Courteous, Kind, Obedient, Cheerful, Thrifty, Brave, Clean, and Reverent. Our future leaders are cultivated through a combination of educational and fun activities, instilling lifelong values. Through various programs, the Boy Scouts of America strive to create a more conscientious, responsible, and productive society, and they have succeeded now for one hundred years.

The distinguished products of scouting can be found among my colleagues. Of the 111th Congress, 211 members have participated with the Boy Scouts of America, either as a youth member, an Eagle Scout, an adult volunteer, or some combination of the three. Personally, I take great store in what I learned as a Boy Scout and Eagle Scout. The experience has been a great influence on both my personal life and my work in Congress. I am especially honored to have received the Distinguished Eagle Scout Award, and I also am honored to have been a part of Alvin Townley's book, "Legacy of Honor: The Values and Influence of America's Eagle Scouts."

Madame Speaker, we should all be inspired by the Boy Scouts of America and we should all be motivated to incorporate their goals into our daily lives. As the Boy Scout slogan says, we should all "do a good turn daily." For the past one hundred years, the Boy Scouts of America have lived this ideal, and our country is a better place due to their actions. On this day, I extend my sincerest congratulations to the Boy Scouts and join them in celebrating their Centennial Anniversary, and I pray that God will grant them one hundred more!